

ASSEMBLY BILL 245

TESTIMONY

Curt Gielow, Executive Dean
Concordia University Wisconsin School of Pharmacy

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Assembly Health Committee,

It's indeed a pleasure to be back among you and in the beautiful Capitol again. After I left the Legislature in 2007 I joined Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon in the position of Executive Founding Dean, charged with the development of Wisconsin's second school of pharmacy. Wisconsin is the state in the nation with the most acute shortage of pharmacists....something most people don't know. Pharmacists are in acutely short supply in the smaller communities in northern Wisconsin. Our new program, now in its second year with students, complements the prestigious 125 year old program of the U.W. Madison. Of the 155 students now studying at the Concordia School of Pharmacy, more than 72% come from Wisconsin and more about 25% come from the smaller, rural areas of northern Wisconsin. A large percentage of pharmacists practicing in Wisconsin are over age 55 and the combination of looming retirements, an aging baby boomer population using more medications, and simply the significant increase in the average number of prescriptions per capita is driving the need for Wisconsin to have more pharmacists to serve the State. We believe we are truly helping address the healthcare access issues for citizens of our state. As an example, recent the statute change allowing properly trained pharmacists to administer flu and other vaccines to persons over age 6 allows greater access to immunizations for Wisconsin families in convenient and less expensive ways.

Training the next generation of Wisconsin pharmacists requires contemporary pharmacy education to prepare students for collaborative practice with colleagues in the other healthcare disciplines while serving as the medication therapy expert to that collaborative healthcare team. The complexity of drug utilization, contraindications, dosage forms, toxicology and pharmacodynamics makes training pharmacists with the use of REAL medications imperative. It's not possible to teach the consequences of chemical drug interactions using fake drugs or placebos.

An unintended consequence of statute language changes several years ago eliminated the right of schools of pharmacy, and perhaps medical schools and other health related educational institutions where legitimate research was being conducted, from procuring legend drugs (e.g. those requiring a prescription) from a wholesale drug company that sells these legend drugs to pharmacies and licensed institutions throughout our state. Schools of pharmacy are not licensed as pharmacies as we can't meet the PEB regulations to hold a Wisconsin pharmacy license. Nevertheless we employ pharmacists as faculty. Access to legend drugs for legitimate teaching purposes is precluded by current statute that denies our legal abilities to procure these drugs. As our new school is not associated with a medical school or academic teaching hospital we have no legal mechanism to procure legend drugs for teaching and research purposes.

Assembly Bill 245 simply allows procurement of legend drugs by institutions of higher education if the purpose is solely for teaching and/or research and not for resale.

We would appreciate your unanimous support of this statute fix by approving passage of AB-245 as soon as possible.



JIM OTT

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 23rd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-0486
District: (262) 240-0808
Toll-Free: (888) 534-0023
Rep.Ottj@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-8953

Good morning Chairman Stone and committee members. Thank you for holding this hearing on Assembly Bill 245. I'm joined this morning by Curt Gielow, formerly the Representative of the 23rd Assembly District and now the mayor of Mequon. Mr. Gielow is also a pharmacist and the dean of the Concordia University School of Pharmacy.

AB 245 corrects an unintended effect of a provision in the 2007-08 budget. Prior to 2007, Wisconsin's wholesale distribution law allowed educational institutions to purchase prescription drugs from wholesale distributors for research, teaching and testing. There was no intent to change this provision of the law in the budget, and initially it wasn't even noticed that the law had changed.

In 2010 Concordia University opened the second pharmacy school in Wisconsin, a historic event. Because of the unintended consequence of the provision in the 2007-08 budget, the school is prohibited from purchasing drugs and must depend on placebos. This is unacceptable. AB 245 authorizes a manufacturer or wholesale distributor of prescription drugs to deliver these drugs to a faculty member of a public or private institution of higher learning in Wisconsin for the purpose of lawful research, teaching or testing and not for resale.

While Concordia University has a beautiful campus in the heart of my assembly district, I want to emphasize that this bill will benefit the entire state of Wisconsin as well as other institutions in our state. Seventy percent of the Pharmacy School students in the first two entering classes are from our state, so the school is filling a need for students statewide.

Second, it has become evident that the provision in the 2007-08 budget also affects other institutions in Wisconsin that need to purchase wholesale drugs for research and teaching. This bill will benefit those institutions as well.

Now Mr. Gielow will offer some additional testimony and also answer any questions for the committee.